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Michael D. Hooven

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CHICAGO, IL 60606

EXAMINER

CHEN, VICTORIA W

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/015,868		Applicant(s) HOOVEN, MICHAEL D.	
	Examiner VICTORIA W. CHEN		Art Unit 3739	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 April 2008.

2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) 50, 54-58 and 67-81 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) 50, 54-58 and 67-81 is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 3/25/02 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:

1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4/11/08

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 50, 54, 56-58, 67-69, 71-73 and 75-80 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Paraschac (US H1745).

Regarding claim 50, Paraschac discloses an ablation apparatus comprising first [116] and second [117] jaw assemblies [Fig. 5], the jaw assemblies being movable between open and closed positions, each jaw assembly having an elongated electrically conductive member [147, 148], the conductive members in face to face relation and connectible to a bipolar energy power source [col. 7, ll. 5-9] so as to be of opposite polarity, each jaw assembly including an internal jaw support member [134, 164, Fig. 5] and an insulative cover [146, 156] that surrounds the internal jaw support member [Fig. 5], wherein the internal jaw support member is insulated relative to the conductive member of the respective jaw assembly.

Regarding claim 54, Paraschac discloses each jaw assembly has a clamping surface [inner surfaces of 116 and 117, Fig. 5] having a width, and each conductive member has a tissue contacting portion with a width [widths of elements labeled 119 and 118 in Fig. 5], and wherein each tissue contacting portion's width can be seen to be less than the width of the associated clamping surface.

Regarding claim 56, Paraschac discloses the conductive member is generally centrally located relative to the clamping surface [Fig. 5].

Regarding claim 57, both conductive members define an interior lumen [120, 121].

Regarding claim 58, Paraschac discloses each jaw assembly has a clamping surface [inner surfaces of 116 and 117, Fig. 5] and a portion of the clamping surface is disposed on each side of the conductive member [Fig. 5].

Regarding claim 67, it is inherent that each jaw assembly includes an opening disposed for receiving a respective conductive member therein, since there is a conductive member within each jaw assembly.

Regarding claims 68 and 73, it is inherent that each insulative cover includes an opening disposed for receiving a conductive member therein since each insulative cover [146, 156] surrounds its respective conductive member [147, 148]. The opening can also be interpreted as a groove.

Regarding claim 69, each jaw assembly has a clamping surface [inner surfaces of 116 and 117, Fig. 5] and each insulative cover [146, 156] is located on each side of the respective elongated conductive member [Fig. 5] of the corresponding jaw assembly and forms the clamping surface.

Regarding claim 71, Paraschac discloses each elongated conductive member protrudes through an opening in the respective insulative cover [Fig. 5].

Regarding claim 72, Paraschac discloses each jaw assembly has a clamping surface and each elongated conductive member is substantially flush with the respective clamping surface [Fig. 5, e.g. 118 is flush with 134].

Regarding claim 75, Paraschac discloses the clamping surface is insulative, since clamping surface [inner surface of 116, Fig. 5] includes insulative parts [146, 134].

Regarding claim 76, Paraschac discloses an ablation apparatus comprising first [116] and second [117] jaw assemblies [Fig. 5], the jaw assemblies being movable between open and closed positions, each jaw assembly having an elongated electrically conductive member [118, 119], the conductive members in face to face relation and connectible to a bipolar energy power source [col. 7, ll. 5-9] so as to be of opposite polarity, each jaw assembly including an internal jaw support member [147, 148, Fig. 5] and an insulative cover [134, 164, 146, 156] that sufficiently surrounds the internal jaw support member to prevent contact of the internal jaw support member with the selected ablation area [Fig. 5].

Regarding claim 77, it is inherent that each jaw assembly includes an opening disposed for receiving a respective conductive member therein, since there is a conductive member within each jaw assembly.

Regarding claim 78, it is inherent that each insulative cover includes an opening disposed for receiving a conductive member therein since each insulative cover [e.g. 146 and 134 for jaw assembly 116] surrounds its respective conductive member [147].

Regarding claim 79, Paraschac discloses each insulative cover is located on each side of the respective elongated conductive member and forms the clamping surface [e.g. Fig. 5, insulative cover part 134 forms part of clamping surface of jaw 116].

Regarding claim 80, Paraschac discloses each elongated conductive member protrudes through an opening in the respective insulative cover [Fig. 5].

Claims 50, 54, 56, 58, 67-70 and 72-75 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kamiyama et al. (US 5151102).

Regarding claim 50, Kamiyama discloses first and second jaw assemblies [10, Fig. 2], the jaw assemblies movable between open and closed positions, each jaw assembly having an elongated electrically conductive member [10f] in face to face relation [Fig. 4], connectable to a bipolar energy power source [col. 2, ll. 19-23], each jaw assembly including at least one internal jaw support member [10b, Fig. 4] and including an insulative cover [10a] that surrounds the internal jaw support members, wherein the internal jaw support member is insulated relative to the conductive member [10f] of the respective jaw assembly [Fig. 4].

Regarding claim 54, Kamiyama discloses each jaw assembly has a clamping surface [surface of element 10 in Fig. 4] with a width and each conductive member has a tissue contacting portion with a width [10f] and wherein each tissue contacting portion has a width that is less than the width of the associated clamping surface [Fig. 4].

Regarding claim 56, Kamiyama discloses each conductive member [10f] is located generally central to the associated jaw assembly [Fig. 4].

Regarding claim 58, Kamiyama discloses each jaw assembly has a clamping surface [surface of element 10 in Fig. 4], and a portion of the clamping surface is disposed on each side of the conductive member [10f, Fig. 4].

Regarding claims 67, 68 and 73, it is inherent that there is an opening in the insulative cover [10a] disposed for receiving the respective conductive member [10f] within each jaw assembly since the conductive member is seen as being within the insulative cover of each jaw member [Fig. 5]. The opening can also be considered a groove.

Regarding claim 69, Kamiyama discloses each jaw assembly has a clamping surface [surface of element 10 in Fig. 4] and each insulative cover [10a] is located on each side of the respective elongated conductive member of the corresponding jaw assembly and forms the clamping surface [Fig. 4].

Regarding claim 70, Kamiyama discloses at least two internal jaw support members [Fig. 4, 10b] on each jaw.

Regarding claim 72, Kamiyama discloses each jaw assembly has a clamping surface [surface of element 10 in Fig. 4] and each elongated conductive member [10f] is flush with the respective clamping surface [Fig. 5].

Regarding claim 74, Kamiyama discloses the insulative cover [10a] insulates the corresponding internal jaw support member [10b] from the conductive member [10f] [col. 2, ll. 29-34].

Regarding claim 75, the clamping surface [surface of element 10 in Fig. 4] is insulative since it includes the surface of insulative cover [10a].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 55 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Paraschac, as applied to claim 50 above.

Regarding claim 55, Paraschac teaches the claimed invention except for the specific length and width of the conductive members. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the length and width of the conductive members since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233.

Claim 81 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Paraschac in view of Morrison (US 3987795).

Paraschac teaches a first [116] and second [117] jaw assemblies [Fig. 5], the jaw assemblies being movable between open and closed positions, each jaw assembly having an elongated electrically conductive member [118, 119], the conductive members in face to face relation and connectible to a bipolar energy power source [col. 7, ll. 5-9] so as to be of opposite polarity, each jaw assembly including at least one internal jaw support member [147, 148, Fig. 5] and an insulative cover [134, 164, 146, 156] that surrounds the internal jaw support member. However, Paraschac fails to teach the insulative cover completely surrounding the internal jaw support member. Morrison teaches an internal jaw support member [32, i.e. electrode] completely surrounded by an insulative cover [36, Fig. 34] in a bipolar jaw assembly [col. 4, ll. 20-24] in order to ensure that arcing occurs at both electrodes [col. 9, ll. 42-45]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the device as taught by Paraschac by completely surrounding the internal jaw support member with an insulative cover as taught by Morrison in order to ensure that arcing occurs at both electrodes.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 4/11/08 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The new claim limitations have been addressed above.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to VICTORIA W. CHEN whose telephone number is (571)272-3356. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Linda Dvorak can be reached on (571) 272-4764. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Victoria W Chen/
Examiner, Art Unit 3739

/Michael Peffley/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3739